Polity & Governance · GS - II

e-governance projects have a built-in bias towards technology and back-end integration than user-centric designs. Examine.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2025	GS - II	Polity & Governance

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Technology-centric governance, interoperability, back-end integration, citizen-centric design, digital divide, accessibility, language, last-mile delivery, privacy, feedback

Model Answer

Introduction

E-governance seeks to use technology to make public administration efficient, transparent and accessible. However, many projects historically prioritised digitisation of departmental processes over citizens' actual service experience.

1. Why the bias emerges

Departments often measure success through databases, portals, interoperability and backend integration. This can produce technically integrated systems while retaining complex procedures, multiple logins, repetitive documentation and bureaucratic workflows.

The World Bank notes that earlier digitalisation efforts frequently centred on provider processes, whereas citizen-centric governance requires designing services around different users' needs and capabilities.

2. Consequences

Such bias may exclude digitally illiterate citizens, persons with disabilities, elderly people and those facing poor connectivity. Language barriers and authentication failures can convert technology into a new access barrier.

3. Way forward

India's next phase of e-governance should adopt life-event-based design, multilingual interfaces, accessibility-by-design, assisted digital services, grievance redressal and continuous user testing. The World Bank's GovTech framework explicitly treats citizen-centric design and universal accessibility as core dimensions of digital government.

Conclusion

Technology should remain an enabler rather than the objective. Successful e-governance is ultimately measured by whether citizens receive simpler, faster and more inclusive services.

BECOME IAS
AI POWERED UPSC PREP